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SYRIAN SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM:

A MIDTERM REPORT CARD

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[redacted] direct Syrian involvement in the attempt to bomb an El Al jet in London last April followed by a high level US demarche in May apparently led Damascus to lower its profile in terrorism -- at least temporarily. Syrian-supported terrorist groups went into a two-month operational lull, [redacted]

Syria continues to have political links to Libya and Iran. [redacted]
Syria and Libya support some of the same groups, [redacted], but the relationship between Syrian President Assad and Libyan leader Qadhafi is not marked by a high level of mutual trust. Relations between Syria and Iran have been troubled by the growing threat posed by the Iranian-backed Hizballah to Syria's efforts to stabilize Lebanon. [redacted] b3

Syrian-Support For International Terrorism Since El Al

Following the failed attempt to bomb the El Al jet in London last April, Syria probably directed its own personnel to refrain from any clearly traceable terrorist activity. Damascus may also have instructed the terrorist groups it supports to postpone temporarily any planned operations. [redacted]

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Approved for Release
Date JUN 1999

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Syrian Measures to Contain Iran and Hizballah in Lebanon

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We believe that Damascus' restrictions on Iranian activities in Lebanon reflects Syria's frustration with its inability to contain the rapidly growing Hizballah, and concern that Iranian influence could come to rival Syrian influence in Lebanon. [REDACTED] b3

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Damascus has also tried to expand its security presence beyond Beirut in part to bring the Hizballah-controlled areas under its control. Beginning in July, Syria deployed troops into western Beirut and later into the southern suburbs. [REDACTED] b3

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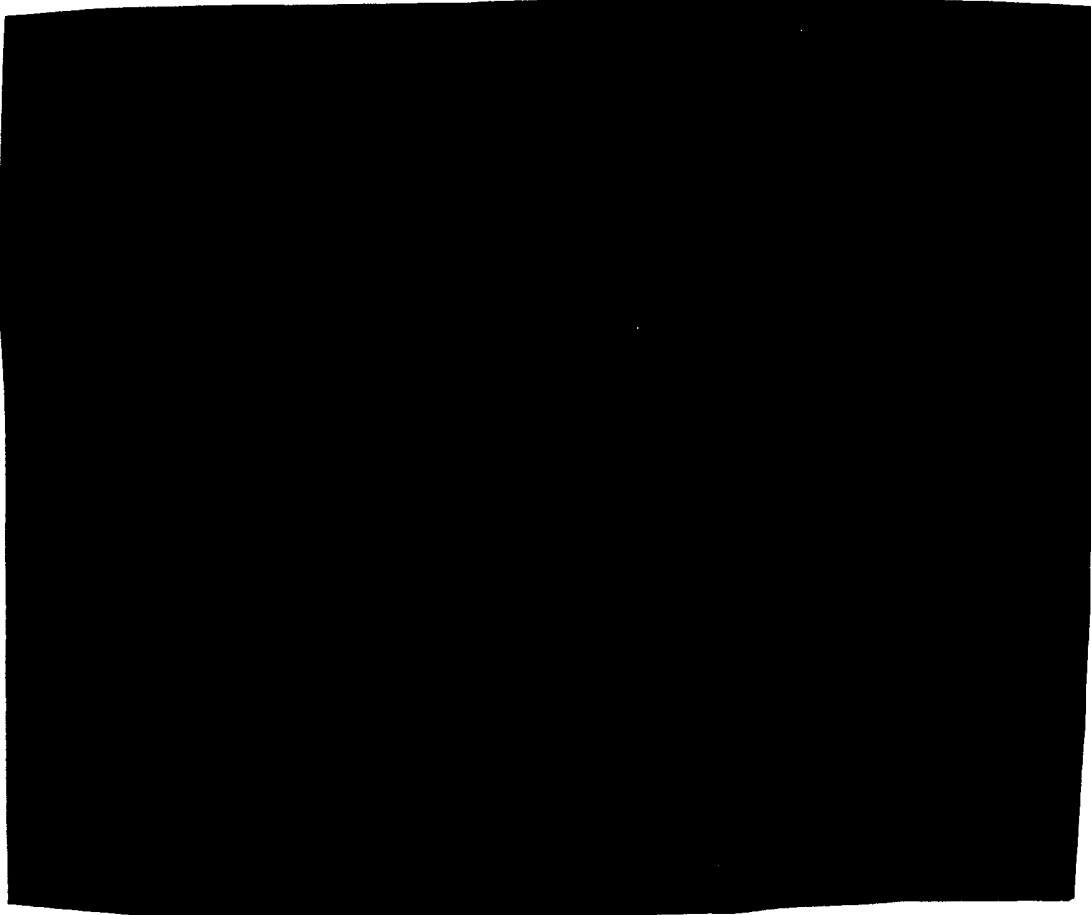
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The new, enhanced Syrian presence was too small to control the city. In early September, two more American hostages -- Frank Reed and Joseph Cicippio -- were abducted in West Beirut. Syrian officials apparently believe that Hizballah was responsible for both kidnappings; but we cannot confirm that Hizballah conducted either operation. Both were claimed by a group that may receive Libyan backing. ~~_____~~ b3



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